(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Petrochemicals Corporation Ltd. (IPCL) offered distributorship for polymers without following prescribed procedures, during the last two years; and

(b) the action proposed to enquired into the matter through the Vigilance Commissioner or CBI?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) Indian Petrochemicals Corporation Limited (IPCL) had issued an advertisement in January, 2001 for appointment of Consignment Agents at different locations in the country. In view of the process of disinvestment of Government's equity in IPCL along with transfer of control of management and market dynamics, IPCL decided not to appoint any new consignment agents. However, considering the competitive business environment and the requirements of the company, it was decided to allow the three existing chemical distributors with proven capability, at Ahmedabad, Delhi and Mumbai to deal in polymer products also initially for a period of one year subject to review. This decision was taken after following the appropriate procedure.

(b) Does not arise.

Increase in prices of medicines

†5427. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that Government are considering to increase the prices of medicines;

(b) if so, whether Government would consider not to increase the prices of medicines;

(c) whether Government have any consideration in this regard so far; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) to (d) Fixation/revision of prices of scheduled bulk drugs and formulation based thereon is an on-going process and is undertaken by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) in accordance with the provisions of the Drugs (Price Control) Orde , 1995.

Transfer of Hindi speaking officers of KRIBHCO

†5428. SHRI MUNNAVAR HASAN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether KRIBHCO has transferred its Hindi speaking marketing officers to Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether knowledge of local language is essential for marketing and business promotional works; if so, whether the said officers have the knowledge of the local languages of these places; and

(d) if not, by when such Hindi speaking officers would be transferred to Hindi speaking States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) to (c) The transfers have been made on promotion, rotation as per guidelines, re-deployment of manpower etc. Since these are managerial posts, requirement of knowledge of local language has not been considered essential. A list of Hindi speaking officers who were transferred to Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra is given in Statement. (*See* below).

(d) Does not arise.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.